

Park End Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111632
Local Authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	301741
Inspection dates	20–21 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Alan Keenleyside

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	461
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Porley
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Hall
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2003
School address	Overdale Road Middlesbrough TS3 0AA
Telephone number	01642 314309
Fax number	01642 300885

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Park End Primary is a larger than average primary school which serves an area of considerable social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with just a few from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average overall. There is a breakfast club held on the school premises. The headteacher was new in post in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Park End Primary is a good school with excellent provision in the pastoral care and support it provides for its pupils; a view endorsed by parents. The school has a good capacity to be even better. Inspectors agree that the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness is accurate. Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and a broad and stimulating curriculum.

This is a bright, vibrant school that extends a warm welcome to everyone and pupils very much enjoy their time in school. High quality displays on walls and classrooms are engaging and pupils' achievement is clearly celebrated with care and pride. The school places great emphasis on creating a climate where every child is valued and encouraged to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Parents are hugely supportive and recognise the outstanding levels of care and dedication of the staff. One parent expressed the views of many when she said her son 'really enjoys school and even asks to go at weekends'. Pupils say they feel safe and get on well with one another. They have a very good understanding of the importance of keeping fit and eating healthily through the school's extensive range of activities and good quality provision. Pupils confirm they have opportunities to air their views and make an effective impact upon school through the school council.

Most pupils start school with knowledge and skills which are low for their age. By the time they leave in Year 6, they have made good progress, although current standards are below average overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress. Within this overall picture, the pupils have made outstanding progress in English because of the school's successful focus on writing. However, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to practise their literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects to consolidate and build further upon their learning. Despite this, the pupils' achievement is good because they are well taught and provided with highly effective pastoral support which helps them to overcome the many obstacles to learning which they face.

Although the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 were significantly below average in 2007, they reflect a steady trend of improvement by the end of Key Stage 2, where the gap between the school's results and the national averages is closing. The results in mathematics are improving more slowly than those in English and science.

Under the drive and enthusiasm of the headteacher, everyone pulls in the same direction and is committed to improvement. Leaders at all levels have a good understanding of what the school needs to do better and a clear plan for improvement is based on an accurate evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. For example, the headteacher has identified that the assessment of pupils' attainment is not always accurate, especially in mathematics, and that assessment information is not always linked well enough to the teaching to ensure consistently good year on year progress for all pupils. Governors are supportive and are beginning to develop a more robust view of the school. The school is well thought of in the community and there are good partnerships with other schools and agencies. It provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

From low starting points the children make good progress, although standards by the end of Reception are still well below those which might be expected for their age. Adults plan a good range of stimulating activities which capture the interest of the children. Teaching is good

because all adults help children to enjoy their learning, feel secure, gain confidence and communicate with others. A strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills helps children make a good start in verbal communication. The learning environment is caring, safe and stimulating. Home visits from Nursery staff, and parenting classes provided by Sure Start in partnership with the school, ensure that staff know each child and their family well. Leadership and management are good and ensure that adults plan activities that take good account of children's prior learning experiences and are closely tailored to individual learning needs. A good balance is struck between practical, free choice activities and adult-led activities. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are identified early and met.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Improve the accuracy of assessment, especially in mathematics.
- Ensure that assessment is used effectively so that all pupils make consistently good year on year progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most pupils start school with knowledge and skills which are low for their age. By the time they leave in Year 6, they have made good progress, although current standards are below average overall. Pupils' achievement is good because they are well taught and provided with highly effective pastoral support which helps them to overcome the many obstacles to learning which they face.

Inspection evidence and school data show that in Year 2, current standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics; though writing is much stronger and closer to average. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are broadly average and this reflects the pupils' outstanding progress in this area. Standards in mathematics and science are below average. The school has been successful in raising standards in English because of its focus to improve pupils' writing.

Although the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 were significantly below average in 2007, current standards are better and they reflect a steady trend of improvement by the end of Key Stage 2, where the gap between the school's results and the national averages is closing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and support their learning well. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Pupils develop a good understanding of themselves and their place in the wider world. As a result, they behave well and are usually caring and considerate towards each other. Pupils feel very secure and well cared for in school. They say that they would be happy to approach any member of staff for help. As one child said, 'The teachers look after us and keep us safe'. Pupils display strong, positive attitudes to learning and look forward to coming to school. Those on the school council

feel that their views are taken into account and readily describe changes that have taken place following their suggestions, such as speed bumps outside the school. Pupils have an excellent awareness of healthy lifestyles and participate enthusiastically in an extensive range of sporting and physical activities, including walking to school, growing their own vegetables and visiting a residential outdoor centre. Pupils are also very aware of the importance of a balanced diet and they make healthy choices at mealtimes. Gaining the gold Healthy Schools and Activemark awards confirms the school's outstanding commitment to the pupils' health and well-being. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their learning personally and socially but their basic skills, particularly in numeracy, remain a weakness. Rates of attendance are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some outstanding features at both key stages. Very good relationships and clear expectations help pupils to succeed in their learning and praise is used well to encourage further effort. Where the teaching is most effective, activities are well matched to the needs and abilities of pupils. However, this is not a consistent feature throughout the school as assessment information is not always accurate enough to set work which appropriately challenges all pupils.

Teachers often plan practical activities to excite and engage their pupils and develop a spirit of enquiry. For example, in literacy, one class retold a story through role-play and in another excellent use was made of the pupils' information and communication technology skills to prepare a multi-media presentation for Nursery parents. This ensured that learning was memorable and fun as well as having a practical outcome. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress relative to their capabilities. Throughout the school, teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide effective support to pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good with some outstanding features. All statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is well planned to stimulate pupils' interests and encourage the development of their talents. However, planning for the development of basic skills across the curriculum is satisfactory overall and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects to consolidate and extend their learning further. The school goes to great lengths to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties so that they are able to learn equally successfully alongside their peers. The school gives high priority to helping pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and learn about personal safety. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils are encouraged to talk through and explain difficulties they may have in managing their behaviour and in their relationships with others. There is excellent enrichment for learning through the many out-of-school clubs, the many school visits and the regular visitors to the school. Pupils value these opportunities highly and take up rates are high. Links with other schools and external providers are very good and involve the pupils in many sporting and creative activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support pupils receive are good. The pastoral care and support are excellent and strongly promote the removal of the many obstacles to learning that pupils face. The high levels of commitment of the staff provide a happy and safe learning environment in which each pupil does well in all areas of development. Good child protection procedures, with all statutory requirements met, and thorough risk assessments, such as those for the many trips pupils make from school, are in place.

The school works hard to involve parents effectively in their children's learning and the partnership with Sure Start has increased these opportunities for parents. Support for families, such as the successful breakfast club, is very effective and the school works well with a wide range of outside agencies to ensure that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. The induction of children into the Foundation Stage is thoughtfully planned and strong links have been established with local high schools to ensure that pupils moving to the next stage of their education are well supported. The school's systems for assessing pupils' standards and progress are not sufficiently robust to provide the accurate information needed for guiding pupils' academic progress. There are some very good examples of effective marking which indicates to pupils how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The leadership, vision and commitment of the headteacher are very good. In the short time since her appointment she has been particularly successful in securing strong teamwork from all staff so that the work of leaders at all levels is developing well with a tight focus on raising achievement and standards. This has led to improved teaching, positive pupil attitudes and good behaviour.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate in highlighting areas that need to be improved such as its focused work on improving standards and the accuracy and use of assessment. Teachers' individual performance management targets are tightly linked to whole-school priorities so that there is a cohesive approach to bringing about change. A well-planned programme of staff development and training is tightly focused on the priorities for school improvement. As a result of the recent data analysis carried out, the school has set challenging and realistic targets linked to improving standards.

The development of the governing body since the last inspection remains satisfactory. Governors provide good support for and close involvement with the school, but as yet are at the early stages of challenging the school on its performance. Nevertheless, much has already been achieved. They have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are increasingly knowledgeable about what is happening in school. There is a high degree of commitment at all levels across the school and the capacity for improvement is good. Effective partnerships with parents, carers, other agencies and the wider community have helped to enhance the curriculum and the involvement of pupils in their education. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Effective steps have been taken to improve the school since the last inspection. Resources are very well used and the school provides good value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

22 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Park End Primary School, Middlesbrough, TS3 0AA

As you know, I inspected your school recently. First, let me thank you on behalf of the inspection team and myself for making us so welcome during our time at Park End. You were very helpful in providing information which showed how pleased you were to attend your school and how much you enjoy your education. Your behaviour and the hard work which you showed in lessons were good. Well done, you are a credit to your school.

Park End Primary is a good school and it does excellent things as well. In particular, the staff provide you with excellent care and support while you are in school. All the staff work hard to help you learn and they do it very well so that you achieve well. You take a good part in school life and join in many things. You told us that in particular how much you enjoy all the after-school activities which are provided for you. Your school council does a very good job on your behalf, for example, getting the speed bumps put outside the school, and the headteacher values what it has to say.

The staff and governors are determined to make the school even better. They have good ideas and high quality plans. They are going to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. They are going to improve the way they use the information they have about you to make sure that the work you receive is always exactly right for you. In most cases it already is.

I should be grateful if you would thank your parents for all the very useful information they provided. They clearly like your school and consider that it really cares for you. They are right to think so. Thank you once again for making our visit to Park End so enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

Alan Keenleyside

Lead inspector